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PROTEST
#14-0343

April 7, 2014

DEQ VALLEY

Stephen M. Nichols
P.O. Box 540
Palmyra, Virginia 22963

APR 08 2014
To: 604
Date: _____

RE: Proposed Water Intake and Pump Station

Dear Mr. Nichols:

I write to record my concerns about relocating the proposed water intake and pump station as authorized by VWP Individual Permit Number 04-0805 dated June 12, 2006 from the original Brema Bluff location to the proposed site at Point of Fork near Columbia, Virginia. As you know, several concerns were voiced by members of the community who gathered at the public meeting on Wednesday March 27, 2014 in Palmyra, Virginia.

Among those present were several landowners whose properties along the James River surround the proposed site, an historian concerned about the potential destruction of the remnants of the historically significant James River and Kanawha Canal works, towpaths and locks which are located at the confluence of the Rivanna and James Rivers at Point of Fork and other members of the public like myself who are lucky enough to own properties on the James River in close proximity to the site selected for this proposed facility.

The Conceptual Design charts and documentation provided by the Timmons Group and presented at the meeting depicted an auxiliary power generation building, a pump station, a water intake structure, a pipeline and a gravel roadway which would be utilized to construct and service the installations necessary to conduct water from this site through Fluvanna County and eventually into Louisa County. In addition to the general concerns about the level of noise such a facility would generate during its normal operations and during periodic purgings of the water pipeline and the need to minimize the negative visual impact this industrial facility would have upon the

James River as expressed by those in attendance, I am also concerned about the advisability of relocating this facility to this particular site. The original permit, allowed for withdrawing water from the James River for a facility which was to be located at Bremono Bluff and in close proximity to an existing electrical power generation plant. Bremono Bluff is several miles upstream from the proposed location and that community has enjoyed and endured the effects of an electrical generation plant for a generation now. It is possible they did not resist the prospect of another industrial facility being placed in their community.

The town of Columbia is different in many respects from the Bremono Bluff community. Columbia has a significant history as an important river town as the remnants of the James River and Kanawha canal works and locks attest and it celebrates that history. The Batteau Festival has on several occasions used the boat ramp at Columbia and the surrounding properties along the banks of the James River as one of its overnight stops in its annual pilgrimage from Lynchburg to Richmond.


Point of Fork has historical significance independent of the town of Columbia. It was the scene of a Revolutionary War skirmish between American revolutionary forces and British forces who were frustrated in their attempt to seize the munitions, cannons and supplies stored in the arsenal located there by the Americans who removed the contents from the Point of Fork arsenal and crossed the James River into what is now Cumberland County. The town of Columbia has commemorated that event by hosting several Revolutionary War re-enactments in the town, at Point of Fork and on the properties along the banks of the James River. These events have become cultural assets for this community.

The Columbia boat landing provides recreational access to both the James and Rivanna rivers which present outstanding fishing and canoeing opportunities to recreational users of these two rivers. The quiet and undisturbed views of the natural riverbanks currently enjoyed by recreational boaters and fishermen may be forever altered along this stretch of the James and Rivanna rivers if this project as currently proposed is approved.

The current proposal would: place an elevated auxiliary electrical power generation building next to the Rivanna, this States first designated Scenic River; locate a water intake structure in the James River; and place an industrial sized pumping station on Point of Fork. This infrastructure would be installed and operated in an area that has superior natural and scenic beauty, fish and wildlife, historic, recreational, geologic and cultural assets. These are the very things which the Virginia's Scenic Rivers Act encourages us to preserve and protect.

Finally, if notice to the residents of the town of Columbia and landowners on the South side of the River was not mandated by the truncated permitting process utilized by the James River Water Authority (using the old and unexpired permit issued for the Bremo Bluff site) it nevertheless should have been sent to members of the community where the proposed project would be installed to ensure that the community which would be impacted by any decision would have some say in how or whether this project should be implemented. I am requesting that you and the members of the James River Water Authority reconsider the sight which has been tentatively selected and that you delay this process to allow for additional community input into the current proposal.

Sincerely,



C. James Summers

cc: Brandon Kiracofe, Valley Regional Office DEQ
Melanie Davenport, Central Office DEQ
Fred Hardy,
Frank Hardy